Royal
Astronomical
Society

RAS Techniques and Instruments

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Advice for Reviewers

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1. About the journal

Thank you for agreeing to review for *RAS Techniques and Instruments (RASTI).* Your participation in the peer-review process is critical to the journal's success and we are very appreciative of your assistance.

RASTI is a peer-reviewed scientific journal which covers topics in astronomy and geophysics ranging from instrumentation, data science, machine learning, software, and numerical and statistical methods. The journal is fully open access, and funds raised by publishing in the journal directly support the charitable activities of the Royal Astronomical Society. [Four types of paper](#) are published by *RASTI*: Research articles, Invited Review papers, Comments and Corrections.

As a reviewer of the journal, you have been selected by a Scientific Editor based on your expertise.

2. Reviewing for *RASTI*

Reviewers are granted 21 days to provide feedback on the manuscripts they agree to assess. If you are unable to meet your deadline, please let the Editorial Office know as soon as possible.

To access the manuscript, you will need to log into your Reviewer Centre via the ScholarOne Manuscripts site: https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rasti. The manuscript can be found in your Reviewer Centre under 'Review and Score'.

The reviewer scoresheet has the following features:

- The manuscript PDF can be downloaded from the 'Proof' tab or by clicking the 'Open PDF' link in the 'Details' tab.
- The 'Details' tab shows the version history for the manuscript, author names, a link to the abstract and the name of the Assistant Editor.
- Supplementary files (if any) can be found appended to the manuscript PDF.
- Reviewers should always abide by the **Obligations on Referees of Manuscripts**, as stated in the [RAS Editorial Code of Practice](#), which can be found in the 'Instructions' tab. These cover guidance on what to do if any conflicts of interest arise, and our policy on the use of generative Artificial Intelligence when composing your review.

- **Co-review:** Reviewers have the option of sharing the manuscript in confidence with a reviewer-in-training to assist early-career researchers and graduate students in gaining experience in reviewing manuscripts. The main reviewer will ultimately be responsible for undertaking the review, irrespective of the reviewer-in-training's involvement, and all correspondence will be with the main reviewer. You can fill in the details of the reviewer-in-training when the review is submitted.

- Please return your report on time and let the Editorial Office know as soon as possible if you think you might need some extra time. Automated reminders will be sent.

- You can contact the Editorial Office by clicking the 'Contact Journal' link at the top right of the page.

3. Writing your review

Below, we have provided some guidance for how to write your review for the journal.

- Reviewers should be objective when assessing a paper. If, for any reason, you do not feel you can be objective when providing feedback, please let the Editorial Office know.

- Your review should be thorough: be sure to point out any errors, suggest improvements, and check that the author(s) has sufficiently acknowledged previous work.

- Provide clear, helpful comments. Your review should provide a combination of appropriately positive and critical components, with constructive suggestions. The ultimate goal is to improve the paper.

- If any aspects of the manuscript are outside of your expertise, ensure that you highlight this either in your report or in the 'Confidential comments to the Editor', as the Editor may need to recruit an additional reviewer.

- It is not necessary to spend time checking grammar or spelling. However, if you spot errors that affect the meaning of the text then these should be included in your report.

- Focus on the quality of the science and be more flexible about issues with presentation such as language and grammar. If an article requires copy-editing, this can be done during the proof stage.

- Make sure you are aware which article type you are reviewing, as this may affect your feedback. Research articles, for example, should be concise, while Comments should be of broad interest and constructively presented.

4. Submitting your review

Completing and submitting reviews:

1. Complete the reviewer scoresheet in your Reviewer Centre. There are some standard questions to answer which can be used to help structure your report. Any extra comments regarding these questions can be added into the 'Comments to authors' box or the 'Confidential comments to Editor' box.
   - Required fields are marked with a red asterisk and require an answer before you can submit the review.
   - Reviewers can choose to reveal their identify if they wish but the default is anonymity.

2. Put your confidential comments to the Editor and comments to the authors in the appropriate boxes on the submission form.
   - It can be helpful to provide an initial summary of the work, to contextualise your comments for the Editor, and highlight the paper's strengths, quality, and completeness.
   - Comments can be separated into major or minor comments and/or numbered for structure.
   - Attachments can be uploaded as part of your review, but you should ensure that they do not contain identifying information in the notes/comment boxes/file information if you wish to remain anonymous. To upload an attachment, drag and drop your file into the 'Attach Files' box, or click on the box to open your saved files. **Once your file is attached, please ensure that you select either 'Author & Editor' or 'Editor Only' to complete the upload.**

3. Make your recommendation for the paper using the decision options available and opt either in or out of the post-revision review.

4. The report can be saved by clicking the "Save as Draft" button.
   - To avoid being timed-out and possibly losing your work while submitting your report online, we suggest you write your report in advance and copy and paste your comments into the appropriate boxes.

5. To submit the review, click the "Submit Review" button at the bottom of the score sheet. You will receive an email to confirm that your review submission was successful.

5. Reviewing a revised manuscript

If you are reviewing a revision and have already reviewed the paper before, **the authors' response will be included in the email you receive** from the Editorial Office when you agree to review the paper **or available in your Reviewer Centre under 'View Author's Response'.**

Note that the manuscript number for the paper will be amended to reflect which version of the manuscript you are reviewing. Manuscripts which have undergone one revision by the authors will have .R1 appended to their manuscript number. Manuscripts which have undergone two revisions will have .R2 appended, and so on.

Sometimes we need an alternative reviewer, so a reviewer may be invited to assess a revised version of a paper where the original manuscript was reviewed by other reviewers. The new reviewer will have access to the author's response to previous reviews in their Reviewer Centre.

6. Reviewer recognition

You will receive an email when the paper has been accepted, rejected or withdrawn to ensure that you are aware of the final decision.

We recognise and appreciate that reviewers give up their time for free as a service to the community. Reviewers can get recognition for their review via the [Web of Science Reviewer Recognition](#) service. By opting in when you submit your review, your Web of Science profile will automatically be updated to show a verified record of this review, although please be assured that you will not be publicly identified as the reviewer of the paper in question.

Additionally, as a token of thanks, Oxford University Press offers reviewers a 25% discount on their vast range of books. More information will be provided about this once the paper has reached its final decision.

The Editorial Office can also provide referee accreditation letters, if required, in support of job/visa applications.

Thank you once again for reviewing for *RASTI*.